



## SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BOARD

First Things First (Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board) is a public agency that exists to increase the quality of, and access to, the early childhood development and health system that ensures a child entering school comes healthy and ready to succeed. Passed by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First operates through a tax on tobacco products. Governed by a state board and 31 Regional Partnership Councils, First Things First engages diverse constituencies across the state to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a child and family centered focus that is coordinated and collaborative; a comprehensive systems approach with continuous inquiry, learning and reflection; and, transparency and strong accountability toward achieving outcomes that will ensure all young children start kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life. First Things First acts in accordance with our Beliefs, Actions and Performance statements, which are attached.

### **Position Summary**

The Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives works independently and in agreement with the Chief Program Officer, the Chief Executive Officer and organizational leadership to recommend, develop and implement exemplary early childhood policy and program initiatives with cultural and community responsiveness to achieve the priority goals of the agency. Primary areas of responsibility include internal and professional workforce development, public/private partnerships, organizational development, coordination and capacity building at the system, statewide, and local levels, federal initiatives, as well as other strategic areas determined by the ECDH Board. This position is critical in statewide systems planning and proposes and advances solutions that positively impact and enhance a coordinated state early childhood development and health system and the professional workforce. The Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives reports directly to the Chief Program Officer. This position requires approximately 20% travel throughout the state.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics**

The ideal candidate enthusiastically supports the vision and mission of First Things First, and possesses the personal qualities of integrity, credibility and competency. She/he is an early childhood development and health systems thinker and leader and has a proven track record of coordinating and collaborating with diverse constituencies, organizations and agencies across Arizona and nationally. The candidate demonstrates obvious understanding of and comfort in working in a decentralized, transparent organization.

### **Primary Responsibilities**

- Lead the development of strategic initiatives that improve children's readiness for kindergarten entry, including strategies promoting statewide and multi-regional coordination and capacity building of system partners and service providers.
- Develop national, federal and philanthropic partnerships for the Arizona early childhood development and health system.
- Lead efforts to attract national, federal and other grant opportunities that support FTF strategic initiatives and system and programmatic priorities.
- Advance a comprehensive state early childhood professional development system, including the development and implementation of a coaching/mentoring model for FTF strategies.

- Implement strategies to enhance FTF organizational development in the areas of governance, leadership, ethics, and conflict of interest.
- Direct the programmatic technical assistance approach for all FTF strategies in the areas of early learning, children's health, family support and literacy and professional development.
- Accurately measure and report progress of strategic initiatives.
- Ensure short and long-term strategic plan objectives are achieved to support division and organizational goals.
- Provide effective team leadership; select and retain qualified staff to ensure the provision of high-quality services in a manner consistent with the principles of the FTF organizational culture.
- Assure that financial oversight and program budgeting for strategic initiatives is rigorous, meets fiscal and organizational guidelines and reflects the values and priorities of FTF.
- Contribute to the planning, development, training and implementation of policies, procedures and practices for the Program Division to ensure high quality and efficient services are provided.
- Employ regular cross-divisional communication within the Program Division and with all FTF Divisions.
- Make recommendations to and keep the Chief Program Officer informed on the programmatic operations, issues and needs of the Strategic Initiatives team.
- Represent the Strategic Initiatives team on the Chief Executive Officer's Management Team.
- Coordinate and collaborate with external customers including local partnership council staff and volunteers, board members, state agency and tribal representatives, committee members, contractors and outside service vendors and other community stakeholders.
- Identify areas for self-improvement in order to perform assigned projects and carry out responsibilities to meet desired outcomes; actively pursue appropriate means and methods to increase effectiveness in those areas.

### **Qualifications**

- Thorough knowledge and a minimum 10 years previous experience in early childhood development and health policy issues and effective practices at the state and national level.
- Thorough knowledge and previous experience in early childhood systems and service delivery; of development and support of public/private relationships; of coordination and capacity building; of professional development and technical assistance system development and practices that result in high quality learning opportunities for adult learners; and, of organizational behavior and development.
- Commitment to a comprehensive systems approach and organizational planning that focus on clear priorities, realistic expectations and vigorous assessment.
- Knowledge and prior experience in financial and budgeting principles, contract management, and grant writing and administration.
- Strong team leadership, organizational, management and supervisory skills.
- Experienced facilitation and group leadership skills that result in collaborative success and desired outcomes while working with staff, volunteers, parents, early childhood professionals and providers, community leaders, governmental officials, tribal partners, public and private entities and faith based groups in communities throughout the state.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal relations and oral communication skills necessary to effectively articulate program goals with sensitivity to ethnic, cultural and local community differences.
- Entrepreneurial style and innovative ability to think critically and address problems resourcefully.
- Ability to promote and achieve a broad diversity of thought, background, ethnicity and prospective in providing assistance and resources.

- Commitment to uphold high ethical standards and promote sound business practices.
- History of creating and fostering a mutually respectful work place environment where diverse contributions and perspectives are valued.
- Ability to ensure public transparency and accountability, as well as measure and improve outcomes appropriate for organizational goals.
- Agility and capability to work within a fast-moving environment, while also driving toward clarity and solutions; demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities.
- Technical skills that ensure effective use of computer hardware and software and other communication devices.
- Masters or doctorate degree preferred from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or special education, early childhood development, public policy, organizational development or related field.
- Background of progressively responsible leadership positions in public, private or non-profit organizations, with experience in public policy and program development in early childhood development and health.

This position is not covered by the State Personnel Merit System, but the State of Arizona provides a comprehensive benefits package, including a top-rank retirement plan, low cost health and dental coverage, supplemental policies such as vision and short -term disability, and generous leave programs. Salary range for this position is \$75,000 to \$95,000. Review of resumes will begin on Monday, April 4, 2011 and continue until the position is filled. For consideration please submit a cover letter, comprehensive resume and three professional references to:

[www.azstatejobs.gov](http://www.azstatejobs.gov)



## **Our Beliefs, Actions and Performance**

**We Believe, in order for First Things First to live our Vision, Mission and Values, we:**

*Respect diverse contributions and perspectives as being fundamental to our success.*

*Demonstrate individual and collective responsibility by fulfilling our commitments and excelling in our performance.*

*Conduct ourselves with personal and professional integrity, acting at all times in ways that brings respect and honor to each other, our work and our organization.*

**We Act on our commitment to create positive outcomes for Arizona's young children through:**

Efficient and effective stewardship of resources;

Comprehensive systems approach and organizational planning that focus on clear priorities, realistic expectations and vigorous assessment;

Open, honest and clear channels of communication that foster trust;

Continuous inquiry, learning and reflection;

Coordination and leadership by volunteers, state, local and tribal partners and advocates;

Acknowledgment of and honor for the sovereignty of tribal governments in our work.

**We Perform in a manner that:**

Empowers employees' mutual respect, teamwork and ethical behavior;

Encourages innovation, promotes excellence and creative problem solving;

Cultivates staff development, provides feedback and reflection on performance and celebrates success;

Responds to the evolving nature of our work with flexibility and adaptability;

Creates a positive atmosphere and promotes a healthy work environment and life balance.